

# Post-School Planning for School Leavers with Disability

## Purpose

Post-school planning involves the process of preparing and supporting students with disability as they transition from school to adult life. The purpose of planning is to help them achieve their personal, educational, and vocational goals, while ensuring they have access to appropriate skills, resources, services and support systems.

## Key Stakeholders

Schools can contribute significantly to the post-school success of students with disability by actively engaging the student and their parent/carer in the collaborative planning process. Collaboration with key school personnel, including the careers advisor, along with other relevant agencies responsible for supporting students with disability can provide valuable information, guidance, and access to services.

Ideally, post school discussions should begin during the student's middle years of secondary schooling to allow for comprehensive planning to assess the student's strengths, preferences, and interests, and to identify goals for post-school life.

## Effective Post-school Planning

Research on post-school planning for school leavers with disability has highlighted considerations for best practices. These include:

- Planning that is person-focused, focussing on the student's strengths, preferences, and goals and where the student is actively engaged in decision-making during the process.
- Initiating the post-school planning early has shown to have positive outcomes. Comprehensive planning that addresses multiple domains, including education, employment, independent living, and community participation, tends to be more effective.
- Collaborating, communicating and coordinating all stakeholders, including the student, their parent/carer, school, agencies, and community organisations to ensure a seamless transition and access to appropriate support services.
- Providing opportunities for career exploration, vocational preparation, job shadowing, internships, and supported employment can enhance the student's readiness for the workforce.
- Encouraging self-determination and developing self-advocacy skills are critical for school leavers with disabilities to set and achieve meaningful goals, advocate for themselves, and make informed decisions about their post-school lives.

- Developing skills for job related tasks and independent living skills such as using public transport, accessing appropriate technology, financial matters, time management, interview techniques.
- Linking school leavers with disability to community groups and agencies supports social connections as they move from the structured school environment to the adult world. This may include healthcare providers, counselling services, housing assistance, job coaching, mentorship programs or accessing leisure activities.

## Pathways and Options for School Leavers with Disability

Students with disability have flexible pathways and options to be eligible for Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and/or Higher School Certificate (HSC). Subject selection in Stage 5 and Stage 6 should be considered as part of the collaborative planning process and may inform the pathways and options students take when leaving school.

School leavers with disability may choose to access pathways to further study at university, TAFE or other training providers, or they may explore options for employment, gain an apprenticeship or traineeship, or participate in a work-readiness program or a community-based program. There are agencies that students and their parent/carer can connect with that provide supports for school leavers as they transition to further education, into employment, or other post-school opportunities.

## Steps in Post-school Planning

### Gathering Information

The school should collect information from all stakeholders regarding the student's learning, social, emotional, behavioural and wellbeing strengths and needs. This could include relevant assessments, teacher observations and/or reports from school-based work placements. The student may engage with interest inventories, job-readiness surveys, career checklists or evaluations of independent living skills. The findings from these assessments may guide the goals, supports and services.

Gathering information about local service providers and agencies that support school leavers with disability can be helpful when initiating the post-school planning process. Exploring pre-requisites and enrolment processes for universities, TAFE or other training providers assist in the planning.

# Post-School Planning for School Leavers with Disability

## Consultation and Collaboration

The collaborative planning process should engage the student, and their parent/carer, school personnel and other stakeholders in goal-setting discussions to determine the student's post-school aspirations, such as employment, education, independent living, and community participation. The consultation should be tailored to the needs of the student and their parent/carer and should be clear, timely and transparent for everyone involved with the decision-making.

The post-school planning should encompass areas, such as:

- curriculum and subject selection
- work experience opportunities
- career options based on interests and abilities
- independent living skills
- job-related skills, such as resume writing, interviewing, and workplace etiquette
- self-determination and self-advocacy skills
- money management and financial skills
- transport, travel and road safety
- social engagement and leisure activities
- health and wellbeing
- transition from school-aged to adult services
- access to relevant community and external support services

The collaboration process should identify key priorities, strategies and actions, roles and responsibilities of all parties. Dates to review the strategies and actions should also be identified. Effective communication and coordination to align resources, share information, and maintain consistency will support the student's post-school transition.

## Documentation and Implementation

The key priorities, strategies, actions and responsibilities are usually documented in the student's Individual Plan, or they may be written into an additional post-school transition plan. The plan is shared with the student and their parent/carer and therefore should be written using concise language considering the cognitive abilities of the student.

## Monitoring and Review

Regular monitoring of the student's progress towards their post-school goals will support the review and refinement of the post-school transition plan as necessary. It would be important to continue to provide support, guidance, and feedback to the student and their parent/carer throughout the transition process. Ongoing collaboration with relevant agencies can provide valuable guidance and assistance throughout the post-school transition planning process.



## National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Post School Options

Young people with disability who have a NDIS plan can access further support towards employment goals. The NDIS can fund supports to build skills to prepare for their transition. A student with a current NDIS plan could consider:

- discussing transition planning at their review meeting to identify goals to be including in plan, i.e., travel training, money matters
- sharing the school developed plan with the NDIS team.

## References

- AISNSW Post School Planning for Year 12 School Leavers with Disability  
<https://www.aisnsw.edu.au/teachers-and-staff/supporting-students/students-with-disability/year-12-school-leavers-with-disability>
- National Disability Coordination Officer  
<https://www.dese.gov.au/access-and-participation/ndco>
- NDIS website  
[www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)
- School-based apprenticeships and traineeships  
<https://sbatinnsw.info>
- TAFE disability services  
<https://www.tafensw.edu.au/student-services/disability-services>
- Transition to Work  
<https://jobsearch.gov.au/transition-to-work>
- University disability services  
<https://www.adcet.edu.au/students-with-disability/current-students/disability-services-university>